

Remarks/Arguments

Examination of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested. By the present amendment, claims 1-8 have been amended. New claim 9 has been added.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,576,313 to Smith et al. (hereafter "Smith"). That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites that a tubular member of a second connecting member is inserted into a hole in a first connecting member and pressed onto edge portions of the hole such that the tubular member adheres to the edge portions and the connecting members adhere to each other. The hole in the first connecting member has four, five, or six corners and edge portions which extend between the corners. The tubular member has a corresponding number of corners and edge portions extending therebetween. The edge portions of the hole and the tubular member are concave and arcuate relative to the centre of the hole and the tubular member, respectively.

Smith does not teach a tubular member of a second connecting member that is inserted into a hole of a first connecting member and pressed onto edge portions of the hole such that the tubular member adheres to the edge portions and the connecting members adhere to each other. In Smith, the docking adapter 210, 310, 410 is always spaced apart from the piercing member 170, 370, 470 by abutments 176, 376, 476 when the docking adapter is placed over the piercing member (Figs.

7-10). This spacing prevents the inner surface 214, 314, 414 of the docking adapter 210, 310, 410 from engaging or adhering to the outer surface of the piercing member 170, 370, 470. Thus, the docking adapter and the piercing member are not in a close fit relationship, nor are they pressed onto one another.

Smith also does not teach edge portions of a hole and a tubular member that are concave and arcuate relative to the center of the hole and the tubular member, respectively. In Smith, the edges of the piercing member 170, 370, 470 are all straight (Figs. 8-10) and, thus, are not concave or arcuate. Since the connecting members recited in claim 1 have edge portions which are concave and arcuate, the present invention provides a tight connection. Also, the "grip" between the connecting members recited in claim 1 will be very good because one member will extend into the corners of the other member with a close and tight fit. Furthermore, the piercing member 170, 370, 470 of Smith is easily disconnected from the docking adapter 210, 310, 410 by turning one member relative to the other member. For these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 patentably defines over Smith and is therefore allowable.

Claims 2-8 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1 and for the specific limitations recited therein.

New Claims

Claim 9 recites that a first connecting member has a hole which has at least four corners and edge portions which extend between the corners. The edge portions of the hole are concave and arcuate relative to the center of the hole. A second connecting member can be connected to the first connecting member and

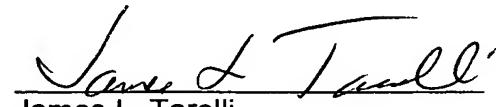
includes a tubular member. The tubular member has a number of corners and edge portions that correspond with the number of corners and edge portions of the hole of the first connecting member. The edge portions of the tubular member are concave and arcuate relative to the center of the tubular member. The tubular member is inserted into the hole and pressed onto the edge portions of the hole. It is respectfully submitted that Smith does not teach this structure.

As noted, Smith does not teach edge portions of a hole and a tubular member that are concave and arcuate relative to the center of the hole and the tubular member, respectively. Furthermore, Smith does not teach a tubular member of a second connecting member that is inserted into a hole of a first connecting member and pressed onto edge portions of the hole. For these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 9 patentably defines over Smith and is therefore allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this
matter to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


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